

## **Bjorn Handeen's statement to Precinct 52 Republicans 3.13.14**

I'm not blind to the controversy that the choice of day and time for this weekly luncheon has caused.

When I initiated this luncheon, the timing was deliberately set as a protest against the extra-party groups that have done so much to factionalize and divide the conservative people of this county.

\*I assert that the only reason we have these extra-political groups is because the county party has neglected its role in communicating with the public, via luncheons and regular newsletters, and all the other functions that Rally Right, and the Reagan Republicans, and NIPAC provide that the official group does not.

-And many have agreed with this message. I have gotten support from the most unexpected of places.

People who I once denounced as mere cocktail conservatives have been trading book reviews with me, sharing long term plans, and agreeing to overlook years of bad blood. This is the way forward.

My message about what is best for the future of the Republican Party has been consistent. We must abandon these extra-party groups, and come together under the legitimate Republican Party structure.

But now, it has been reported by Dave Oliveria in the Spokesman Review, that a faction of Republicans, perhaps more accurately described as the clique that formerly controlled the Party- these establishment Republicans have used their money and their power to create a rival fundraising event, to be held on the same day as the annual fundraising dinner for the Kootenai County Republican Party.

This is a direct attack against the legitimately elected Republican central committee, an attempt to deprive the Republican Party of financial resources, and it is in no way akin to my small protest against an unofficial conservative group.

Let me say that again. I am real elected precinct committeeman, and precinct 52 is a real precinct in a real county. While my protest attacked the idea of factionalism, this faction has responded by attacking an institution that has been elected by the people of our community. It isn't the same thing.

I never in a million years thought that this group would so jealously covet their power and influence that they would be willing to "dig in and start calling the **artillery** in on our own position." (their quote, not mine, as reported in the Spokesman Review Online blog on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. Well, it isn't just their "position". It isn't their party. It's the County's party. It belongs to all of us (in fact, if you listen to Dan English, it even belongs to the democrats)... and I never imagined that they would be willing to sabotage it so brazenly once they weren't in control.

This has gone too far. If only we had known how relentless this scorched earth policy would be pursued. If they are willing to not only abandon the Republican Party, but also choke it to death....sabotage the annual fundraiser, deprive the legitimate party of financial resources, to attack the volunteers that were fairly and freely elected by their neighbors...then..... I refuse to fight. I will not allow my small political statement to be co-opted as another reason for them to attack a legitimate Republican institution.

They have proven once again, that with or without the Central Committee, with or without the will of the voters, the power is and always has, been in their hands.

I hereby disband the Precinct 52 luncheons. Furthermore, I call upon...no, I beg, and I plead... with the board of NIPAC, to change the day of their fundraiser, and to publically encourage the members of their circle to support the KCRCC.